



Muskegon County

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

MUSKEGON COUNTY STAFF

Frank Cox
Career - Mentoring Educator

Julie Hultzsch
Community Nutrition Instructor

Lucas Perry
Community Nutrition Instructor

Rachel Puckett
4-H Supervising Educator

Clarence Rudat
F.A.R.M. Manager

James Sheehan Mental
Health First Aid

Amanda Smith
Office Admin

Wade Syers
Food Safety Specialist

Jennifer Wasson
4-H Program Coordinator

CONNECT



1903 Marquette Ave
Muskegon, MI 49442



231-724-6361



msue.msu.edu
muskegon@msu.edu



Muskegon MSU Extension
Muskegon County 4-H

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

I'm excited to share the results of another successful year of partnership between Muskegon County and Michigan State University (MSU) Extension. Because of your continued support, we've been able to make a difference in the lives of youth, families, businesses, and communities.

MSU Extension offers a broad range of research-based educational services to county residents. Over this past year, we've empowered families and individuals to live healthier lives, supported new and local businesses, created opportunities for youth leadership development and career exploration, helped farmers with business management and mental health, and much more. Our staff live and work alongside county residents, are rooted in community relationships, and are responsive to community needs.

Again, this year, we've welcomed Muskegon County residents into our online community: we've offered online educational courses, answered questions on topics ranging from gardening to food safety, raised program awareness through social media, and provided a library of research-based resources they've browsed on our website.

Our partnership with you makes this all possible. On behalf of the MSU Extension team serving Muskegon County, thank you for another great year. We look forward to your continued support and hope you'll be able to join us during one of our upcoming programs.

James Kelly,

District Director





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MSU Extension Muskegon County

Food • Ag • Youth • Health • Environment • Community

Since 1916, the Michigan State University (MSU) Extension has helped residents in Muskegon County improve their lives through an educational process that applies knowledge to critical issues, needs, and opportunities.

120

Programs delivered in Muskegon County

7,831

Muskegon County Residents
Participated in programs offered by MSU Extension

528

Programs Attended
By Muskegon County residents, either in-county, outside of Muskegon County, or on-line.

1,999

Muskegon County youth
Participated in programs offered by MSU Extension

19,734

Program Participants
In programs led by Muskegon County staff on-line or statewide

84%

Increase

100%

Increase

6%

Increase

105%

Increase

73,517

Reached through Facebook

466,615

Social Media reach of Muskegon Admin

108

Submissions to Ask-An Expert

41

ServSafe training participants

MUSKEGON COUNTY STAFF

3

Educators

5

Program Instructors

1

Clerical Support

50

Partnerships & coalitions

MUSKEGON COUNTY FOCUS AREAS

Agriculture

MSU Extension works to increase farmers' success while protecting the environment, ensuring food safety, reaching new markets and advancing agriculture through applied research. Agriculture is now one of the fastest growing sectors of the Michigan economy.

- Heroes to Hives
- Pesticide Applicator Training
- MI Great Beer Conference
- Farm Financials & Beginning Farmers
- Specialty Crops & Blueberry Irrigation
- Milker Training
- Manure management
- Interactive Pruning Workshop
- Asparagus Day
- Hop Chat, Weed ID & Management

Environment

Our natural resources programs improve public understanding, help landowners and communities use those assets for sustainable long-term social and economic development and conserve natural resources for future generations.

- 101 Soil tests processed.
- 112 Inquiries to "Ask Extension"
- Lakes monitoring & Stream Clean-up
- Wastewater conference
- Invasive Species Summit
- Michigan Birding 101
- Wild About Conservation
- Southern Lake MI Fisheries Workshop
- Home Horticulture Classes

Community

Successful and thriving communities combine knowledgeable and engaged legislators, businesses, community groups and residents. By connecting these groups with the most trusted tools, MSU Extension helps enhance the quality of life in Michigan.

- Homebuyers Education
- Citizen Planner
- 88 Product Center Counselling Sessions
- Effective Board Meetings and Govern.
- Property Tax Foreclosure

Community (cont.)

- Muskegon H.S. Entrepreneurship
- Fiscally Ready Communities
- Mortgage Foreclosure Basics
- Tips to Build and Protect Your Credit
- How to Start Food truck Business
- Retirement Myths and Facts
- Savvy Tips for Starting a Small Business

Health & Nutrition

MSU Extension's programming promotes healthy lifestyles and empowers Michigan residents to take control of their health. Participants learn how to build nutritious diets on a budget, reduce foodborne diseases and become leaders in the food industry.

Holton, Muskegon Heights, Mona Shores, Edgewood EI, Marquette EI, MLK EI, Muskegon

- Chronic Pain PATH
- Tai Chi for Fall Prevention
- Michigan Cottage Food Law
- Food Safety Q & A.
- SLEEP
- Food Preservation
- ServSafe Training
- Smart Gardening
- Diabetes Prevention
- Investigating Food with Science

Family and Youth

Keeping Michigan families strong and successful—

part of measuring MSU Extension's success. Programs devoted to keeping families safe include those dealing with bullying and violence prevention.

- Relax: Alternatives to Anger
- Adulthood 101 – Various Topics
- Stress Less with Mindfulness
- 4-H at the County Fair
- Powerful Tools for Care Givers
- Multiple 4-H events
- Highly successful parenting
- 4-H Exploration Days on MSU Campus
- Positive Disciplining

4-H Muskegon County

*According to research completed by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, 4-H'ers are **4X** more likely to make contributions to their communities, **2X** more likely to be civically active, and **2X** more likely to make healthier choices.*

13
Clubs

158
Members
(3% increase)

55
Volunteers
(12% Increase)

1,089
Hours of
volunteer time

Agriculture



Muskegon County boasts a diverse agricultural economy that produces over \$110 million annually, 65% in crop sales and 35% in livestock.

MSU Extension is helping to make a difference in Muskegon County.

Highlights of MSU Extension Agricultural support in 2023: Muskegon County has a long history of dependence on natural resources, and in particular agriculture, as a strong source of identity and economic prosperity. MSU Extension provided education and support to Muskegon County residents through a variety of targeted workshops and services.

From Manure Management to Christmas Tree Farm Management, Muskegon County residents joined Extension experts for many agricultural workshops. Integrated Pest Management continues to be a significant focus for many farm owners as continued invasive species threaten to decimate various commodities. By attending MSU Extension workshops farmers earned pesticide application license credits that allow them to meet MDARD pesticide application standards.

Muskegon County farmers took advantage of a webinar focused on creating a Farm Business plan. The business plan helps to evaluate alternatives, identify market opportunities, and communicate ideas to potential lenders and business partners. Participants explored how to understand what lenders look for in a business plan when farms are seeking loan financing.

West Central Horticulture Breakfast Meetings are seasonal meetings for tree fruit growers to share timely information, weather updates, and pest and disease information about ongoing or emerging issues. This is a great meeting to share information with growers and engage industry members who sponsor breakfast each week. Asparagus Day and Spring Horticulture Day provided opportunities for farmers to hear the latest research results and industry updates for various commodities. Coupled with one-on-one farm visits and local research plots, Extension services remain an essential piece of a thriving rural county.

In the spring of 2023, MSU Extension relaunched soil testing services for both home and commercial purposes. Both segments took advantage of the testing and accompanying analysis that MSU Extension soil testing services produces.

Agricultural Education will continue to be a focus of Extension. Last fall over 850 families joined their students during lunch time to share a delicious meal that celebrates our local agricultural strength and the bounty of fresh, wholesome foods grown in Michigan. Participants taste-tested a variety of freshly picked Michigan apples and vegetables, ran a straw bale maze, and toured the MSU Mobile Food Processing Lab where students helped press and taste fresh grape juice from a local vineyard. The lab was sponsored by the Howmet Center for STEM Education @ FARM to promote hands-on food processing as a career choice.

